

DAY OF CRUCIFIXION
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Bible Study 1985

We have one question to deal with today, and I am not going to go into all the ramifications of it. That has to do with what day was Christ crucified. Turn to John 19:31. There are a number of approaches and there are at least three or four opinions with regard to it -- some say Friday, some say Thursday, some say Wednesday -- we're trying to deal with this matter of three days and three nights. To me, this is rather a clear testimony and it has solved it for me.

"The Jews, therefore, because it was the preparation that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, for that Sabbath day was an high day, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away." In other words, that hastens death. In verse 42, "There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day, for the sepulcher was near at hand." I'm talking now about the preparation day. Go back with me to Exodus 16. Remember the story of the Lord providing for Israel the manna which they ate for about forty years.

Exodus 16:1: "And they took their journey from Elim and all the congregation came into the wilderness of Sin [incidentally, that is not sin as we know it -- it is the Hebrew word for "clay"] which is between Elim and Sinai on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the children of Israel said unto them, Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the fleshpots and when we did eat bread to the full, for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger. Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a certain amount every day that I may test them whether they will walk in my law or not. And it shall come to pass that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily."

They were supposed to gather some each day, just enough for that day. If they didn't gather quite enough, it increased to be enough; if they gathered too much, that which was left over spoiled. But on the sixth day, which was the preparation day, they were to gather twice as much so they didn't have to gather any on the Sabbath day, and it did not spoil but it kept over that particular day. It was an amazing bit of food that the Lord sent. It was a little hoarfrost on the ground that they gathered in the morning, and when the sun came up it would melt what was left. You could grind it and bake it in the oven -- it was truly miraculous. Here the sixth day was the preparation day. That came over into the Jewish terminology as the preparation day, the sixth day being Friday.

Christ was crucified on the preparation day -- John 19, verse 42 and verse 31. I think Christ was crucified on Friday. In the early church, there is what is known as the Didache, or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. It is not a biblical book, but in the fourteenth

chapter it discusses the Lord's Day and the assembling together to break bread. There the Greek word that is used for Friday is this particular word for preparation day. In the present day Greek language the word for Friday is the word that's used for preparation day. While there are a lot of other questions we might ask, I think these verses are clear enough that I hold to a Friday crucifixion. I think the three days and three nights refers to their common way of speaking.

We have several instances of that in the Old Testament where, for example, David on one occasion in one of their skirmishes caught an Egyptian. The Egyptian's master had left him because the Egyptian fell sick. When they found him he had been without food for three days and three nights, and when they asked him why it was, he said "three days". So in that incident three days and three nights were equal to three days. In the book of Esther, "Pray for me three days night or day before I go in to see the king." Chapter 5, verse 1, she went in on the third day. So any part of a day was counted as a whole day, I think, in Jewish computations. That will not settle all the problems, but I think Friday meets the situation very well.

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